

Cherry King: Film

A Story Valley case study, presented as an example to support other settings to run the programme

Background information

This case study was submitted by Rim Bleeker, a teacher and mentor at Friesland College in the Netherlands.

Rim delivered Story Valley as an intensive project over two days, with a group of students who had come together from Scotland, Slovenia and the Netherlands.



king of cherries

Delivering Story Valley

This section will provide an example of how Story Valley can be delivered as a coherent project.

In particular, you may find this useful for the 'get creative' module – providing ideas of how to develop the stories shared in your initial sessions into a creative project.

Delivering Story Valley

We are interested in the diverse ways in which Story Valley can be delivered in different settings.

How did you plan your first Story Valley session?

During the pitch of the international assignment students got some homework. This means they had already jumped in to the material (a story and a personal object they had to bring with them to the project). Students were in particular encouraged to bring stories from their childhood, and stories typical in their culture.

They had two weeks to think about the assignment and get ideas.

So when the students finally met, there had already been an important creative process personally for each student. So the few days that they were together they could immediately get to work.

They could brainstorm together about their own ideas and tell each other their stories. They connected by talking about the personal objects they brought with them to make the atmosphere more relaxed and fun.

How did you engage students with finding and telling stories?

We talked about stories they could remember from their childhood, and stories that are typical in their culture. We brainstormed together.

What surprised or interested you about the stories that emerged as part of Story Valley?

There are many similarities in the stories the students brought with them to Leeuwarden. That the stories really made a connection between the students. They were very creative with their language.

Can you provide some examples of creative projects students completed as part of Story Valley?

Students made a movie; The Cherry King

Each student involved had different skills (they all went to different schools with different specialisms). They decided that they wanted to make something which related to all of these differences. So, one student was an actor, one a video editor, one a director...together they could unite their talents to make a humorous movie.

A lot of work had to be done in a few days. But they succeeded. They didn't really make a new story but instead chose one of the students' stories (an old myth about a King in a castle under siege, popular in Slovenia) and decided together to modernise this in a creative way, adapting it into a film.

Students also used language in a creative way, combining words from their different languages into the film script. This helped to bring them together – and make the movie more universally entertaining (they relied less on language to communicate the jokes!)

Can you provide an example of how creative thinking and creative practice were developed by your students throughout the project?

Through the collaboration, students got a greater sense of how their individual creative talents were useful to a wider project.

For example, the young person who brought the story thought it was funny, and was able to communicate it well to the rest of the group verbally. However, it was only through the expertise of the film editor and director that their ideas could be realised as a film.

It was interesting to see their discussions progress – observing how they considered new channels and formats for their creativity.

What went well and what you would do differently in the future when running a Story Valley project?

Everything went well! It is all about preparation.

If working with students meeting each other for the first time, I would advise giving them homework so that they have a chance to prepare and feel invested in the project before they meet.

Also the setting is very important. The students could worked together in the old prison;

Blokhuispoort. Where all kinds of materials were available for them. So the setting has to be a creative one.

The creative vibe is the most important; so they get connected with each other and feel responsible.

It is also important that during such a project, the students need focus. So don't obligate them to go to other regular classes and work on other projects during this process. This must be communicated with teachers involved in the school, so the student doesn't have to worry about the regular programme in the school.

What would I do differently; less teachers/professionals were needed in guiding the students than I originally thought.

The students were really in control, and took full responsibility, so only two teachers would have been enough. Give them food, drinks and a good place with a creative vibe and the students will do the rest.

Can you summarise any formal or informal feedback you have received from students regarding their involvement in the project?

Students were enthusiastic about the project. We asked if it would have been better if they had more days to work on the project. But they said this limited time worked perfectly for them. They could really stay focussed, and have fun together, with no time to get irritated or any negative emotions.

Some of them are now 'online' friends.

Sharing creative work

If your students shared their creative projects in any way, it would be great to hear about this!

On what scale was students' work disseminated?

- Internally
- In your local area
- Nationally
- Internationally
- Other (please describe); on their socials so internationally?

Describe how students shared their work as part of your project

They presented their process and final product during a partner meeting where also other guests were invited with literacy backgrounds.
The film is available on the Story Valley website

<p>Can you share any examples with us? (e.g. links, images, videos)</p> <p>You can watch the Cherry King movie using this link. It's hilarious!</p>
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Integrating Story Valley with your curriculum

<p>What was your main objective when you began the Story Valley project?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To build students' literacy skills</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To connect students to stories and storytelling</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To build students' creativity and/or creative skills</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To connect students from different backgrounds</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> To engage students with their learning</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other – please explain</p>
<p>How did you embed Story Valley into your curriculum?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Story Valley was delivered as part of students' curriculum course</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Story Valley was delivered separately – as an extra-curricular activity</p>
<p>How did the Story Valley project link to the objectives of your curriculum?</p> <p>They can put this experience in their portfolio and use it for English, Social Studies and their personal development as a Professional in the creative business.</p>
<p>Did you assess the impact of Story Valley on your students? If so, how did you approach assessment?</p> <p>There was not a specific assessment; they had to give a presentation to the partners in which they also had to reflect on their experience.</p>
<p>How did Story Valley add value to your students' attainment and achievement?</p> <p>It contributed in development of their literacy skills by telling stories and storytelling</p> <p>It extended their creativity and/or creative skills</p> <p>They connected with students from different backgrounds</p> <p>It contributed to their social skills</p> <p>Participating this project increased their self confidence</p>